

IRTS Radio News Bulletin Sunday April 4th 2021

Silent Key - Fr. Harry Houlihan EI3EN

Father Harry Houlihan EI3EN, a native of Dingle, Co. Kerry, passed away suddenly on 22nd January at his home in the Franciscan Friary, Multyfarnham, County Westmeath. He had become a radio enthusiast while a missionary in South Africa where he spent almost forty years. On his return to Ireland, he lived in Cork and Waterford before finishing his days as a Franciscan Friar in Multyfarnham. Our deepest sympathy goes to his brother Val, sister-in-law Julie and his extended family.

IRTS Annual General Meeting

Due to the continuing and forecast Covid-9 pandemic restrictions, the 2021 IRTS Annual General Meeting will be held online on the Zoom platform on Saturday April 24th at 1100. The annual committee report, financial report, committee nominations and formal notice of the AGM are included in the spring edition of Echo Ireland which is now with all members. Also included are details of the email address to register your attendance at the meeting on Zoom. Clubs are invited to give short promotional presentations on their activities in the hour leading up to the Annual General Meeting. Contact Declan EI9FVB for details.

IRTS Contest News

Tomorrow, Easter Monday, IRTS is running a one-hour "Home QTH" contest on 2 metres, starting at 3.00pm local time. This replaces the traditional Easter Monday Counties Contest, which has been cancelled this year due to the current travel restrictions. This year's contest is a distance-scoring event and has SSB/FM mixed mode and FM only sections, as well as an SWL section. See www.irts.ie/contests for full details.

Also, a quick reminder from the Contest Manager that Tuesday next, 6th April, is the deadline for logs for the recent 80 metres Evening Counties contest: send your log to irts.contests@gmail.com

New National Shortwave Listeners Club.

A new club to cater for the needs of shortwave listeners and aspiring radio amateurs was launched during the week. The club is called the National Shortwave Listeners Club and is running the HAREC online class that commenced on Tuesday last March 30th. This class will run for eight weeks on Tuesdays and Thursdays. There has been another massive demand for the classes and sixty five prospective radio amateurs are attending the class on the Zoom platform. Revision nights continue weekly on Wednesdays for the two classes who recently finished their courses and will run until they can sit an examination that will hopefully be held soon, depending on progress made in controlling the Covid-19 pandemic. The new SWL club will meet on Sunday nights at 2000 on the Zoom platform and will provide a forum where newcomers and others can meet and improve on their experiences in our wonderful hobby. The club is affiliated to the Irish Radio Transmitters Society, Enquiries about the club for the time being can be directed to harectraining at gmail dot com.

South Eastern Amateur Radio Group

The South Eastern Amateur Radio Group EI2WRC will be QRV as EI2IMD on Saturday April 24th as an official Marconi station for the International Marconi Day 2021. The station will be active solely from Tramore, Co Waterford. Tramore has a direct connection with Marconi as he often stayed there with his aunt, a Mrs. Cookman who resided at The Cove, Tramore. Due to the current travel situation, the organisers, the Cornish Radio Amateur Club, have allowed the EI2WRC members to run the special call from their own homes. A special QSL card will be made available once printed. More details will be made known in the coming weeks in IRTS news articles and on the SEARG Facebook page and the EI2IMD QRZ page. For more information on International Marconi Day on April 24th, log on to www.gx4crc.com;

The only other EI station listed on the IMD site is EI0MAR from the Martello Tower at Howth in Dublin

The 5 MHz Newsletter Spring 2021

The latest edition of the 5 MHz Newsletter (No 26 –Spring 2021) is now available for free pdf download from the the RSGB 5 MHz page. This edition, edited by Paul Gaskell G4MWO includes 5 MHz news from 4 countries, MARS on 5 MHz, The SARL Worked All ZS 5 MHz Award, the latest World of 5 MHz Map, Useful Websites for 5 MHz, Readers Feedback and CQ Serenade.

On the Air next week

The final UKEICC SSB one hour contest of this season will be held on Wednesday next April 7th starting at 2000. Two Bonus callsigns (Checklogs) worth 10 points each, will be active - EI5G and GM7V. The Japanese JIDX CW contest will be held next weekend starting at 0700 on Saturday and finishing at 1300 on Sunday. The exchange for non-Japanese stations is report and CQ Zone while JA stations will give report and prefecture number. The IG-RY Worldwide RTTY contest runs for 36 hours from 1200 on Saturday next until 1800 on Sunday. The exchange for everyone is RST plus the year you were first licensed. The OK/OM SSB 24 hour contest starts at 1200 on Saturday next and OK/OM stations will give report plus three letter county code and all others give report and serial number. The European FT8 Club run their 24 hour contest also starting at 1200 on Saturday next. US and Canadian stations will give signal report plus their state or province while all others give report and serial number. Please see the European FT 8 Club website for all the details Operators interested in the US Worked All States award should note that State QSO parties are being held next weekend in North Dakota, New Mexico, Nebraska and Georgia. The annual Yuri Gagarin International DX CW Contest 2021 is dedicated to the memory of Yuri Gagarin, who made the first human flight to space, on April 12, 1961. It runs for 24 hours from 2100 on Saturday next and the exchange is RST plus ITU Zone.

No DX news this week but we must mention a report in the ARRL Letter that confirms what we all experience on the bands. The report says that since zooming to prominence after its debut in mid-2017, the popular FT8 digital protocol has become the mode of choice for some 60% of HF operators, according to Club Log's latest activity report compiled by Michael Wells, G7VJR. FT8 is one of the protocols in the WSJT-X suite of free programs. Wells says FT8 activity level sits at nearly 85% on 6 metres. The dramatic FT8 upswing has come at the expense of phone, CW, RTTY, PSK, and other modes.

QSO Today Virtual Ham Expo

Ticket holders for the recent QSO Today Virtual Ham Expo have until April the 16th to visit during the on demand period. Figures released by the organisers show that 4,084 ticket holders have visited the Expo with over 17,000 visits to the exhibitor's booths. After April 16th, all the presentations will be available on their Vimeo and YouTube channels and will be downloadable. The organisers regret the inconvenience caused by software issues in the mid-March event but are working hard to ensure that the next Virtual Ham Expo which will be held on August 14th and 15th will be a great success.

IARU Looks to the Future

Region One of the International Amateur Radio Union will hold a Workshop titled “Facing the Future” in October 2021 hopefully in Novi-Sad Serbia, hosted by SRS, the Serbian Amateur Radio Society. A virtual alternative Workshop will be prepared as well. This will be a root and branch examination of where the hobby of Amateur stands at the present time and what is likely to happen in the future. All Region One National Societies are being asked to participate fully in the debate and IRTS representatives have already participated in preparatory discussions with other national societies. IRTS members with views on the subject are invited to submit them to any committee member.

That is the news for this week. Items for inclusion in next week’s radio news can be submitted by email to newsteam/at/irts/dot/ie for automatic forwarding to both the radio and printed news services. The deadline is midnight on Thursday. Urgent items for the news may be telephoned to News Editor Dave EI4BZ on 087-6290574.

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